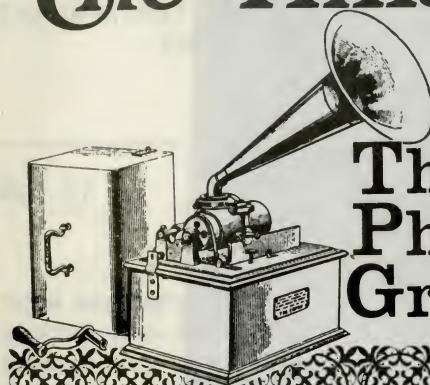


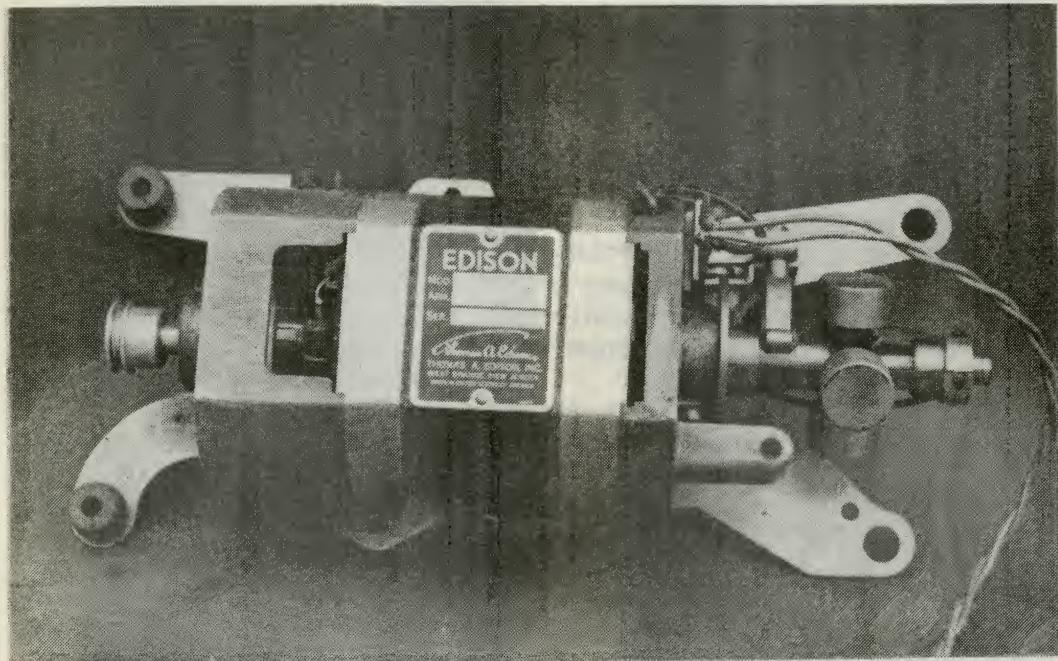
# The Hillandale News



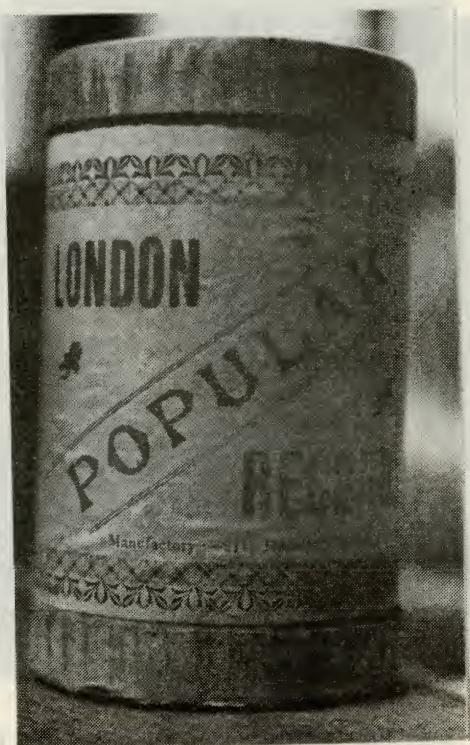
The official journal of the  
**The City of London  
Phonograph and  
Gramophone Society**  
inaugurated 1919

No. 67.

JUNE 1972



EDISON AC/DC ELECTRIC MOTOR FROM DISC RECORDING MACHINE



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\* THE HILLANDALE NEWS \*  
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The Official Journal of  
THE CITY OF LONDON PHONOGRAPH & GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY  
(Inaugurated 1919)

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No. 67

June 1972

EDITORIAL

Some members will receive two issues of the HILLANDALE NEWS this month, one being the April edition which was delayed for reasons beyond our control. The complete editorial office was moved to Reading in May and this has put this copy back a few weeks but, with a little luck the HILLANDALE NEWS will be back to its schedule by the next issue.

Arrangements have been made to transfer mail from the old address but it would help if members could send their letters to the new office. The address is as follows:

10 South Street,  
Caversham,  
Reading, Berkshire,  
England.

A bundle of letters being transferred to the new office have been mislaid by the post office, so if your article does not appear in this issue it will follow in the next. If you have still not written an article for the magazine have a look round your collection and you will be surprised how many interesting items you have got and could tell us about.

Mr Besford, our treasurer, has asked us to inform all New Zealand members that their subscriptions should be sent to him and NOT to Australia, as sending it there will delay it. His address is at the back of this issue.

One last point, would the gentleman from Chicago who kindly sent in his collection of cylinder labels for reproduction please send his name and address as this was not indicated on his letter.

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## PHONOGRAHS AT THE FESTIVITIES

BY ROVER

We are always pleased to hear of members taking part in local activities with their machines, and Geoff Townsend and George Woolford combined parts of their collections and set them up in a bucolic romp of a show called the "Festival of the Arts", centred round the church at Dunmow, Essex.

The room was really too compact and comfy for a wide display, and the stairs too narrow and steep to permit of ready entry, but our members managed to show upwards of a dozen machines and a colourful show of labels and accessories.

Seen on display were a GEM, two STANDARDS, HOMES and a GRAPHOPHONE phonograph, two horned gramophones, a PARLOPHONE and a MEAD (probably manufactured by the Mead Cycle Co. of Liverpool) a PIGMYPHONE child's gramophone and two EXPERTS. There was also an Edison CHIPPENDALE DIAMOND DISC machine and a reproduction Edison TIN-FOIL phonograph.

Machines must have an interesting background and this had not been overlooked. In addition to both common and unusual needle boxes cutters and other accessories, scenes from various aspects of the industry were shown on the walls alongside catalogues and hand outs, and there was a worthy display of honourable and ancient record labels, still stuck to the records of course. It is only when put alongside each other that variations in labels can often be noticed. Records of both shapes were demonstrated to interested visitors who had braved the high winds and drenching squalls to attend. Geoff Townsend and George Woolford should be congratulated on their fine show.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SOCIETY OF EARLY RECORDED MUSIC

In America, the Society of Early Recorded Music is holding monthly meetings, where they give programmes of records from members collections. If any one would like to join them the address is:

2920, So Sepulveda Boulevard,  
Los Angeles 90064,  
USA.

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TALKING MACHINE PIONEERS No. ....  
(from Talking Machine News, Aug 1904)

DR W. MICHAELIS

"Something absolutely new and marvellously cheap" was the opinion our representative formed after a short interview he had a day or two ago with Dr. W. Michaelis, the inventor of the NEOPHONE, at

his office in Maiden Lane. Many a time have our readers asked for a disc machine to play with the ordinary sapphire pointed diaphragm. In many cases we are afraid their chief objection was the trouble in replacing the needle after each disc has been played, and now the NEOPHONE, which might be called a disc phonograph, is ready for those enquirers.

Dr. Michaelis has been associated with the talking machine trade in England and abroad for a great number of years, and hardly a name connected with the trade can be mentioned to him but that he knows the individual, and has interesting facts to relate about him. He has managed branch offices of the Gramophone Co. at various continental cities, and now, after proving the value of his invention by successful sales on the continent, has come to England on a short visit to exploit his invention.

We asked him what advantages he claimed for his machine and discs compared with those at present on the market.

"Regarding the machine," was the reply, "the first feature which I consider an advantage to those who favour discs is the absence of a needle, for which I have substituted a sapphire ball-shaped point on a diaphragm, similar in make to the well known phono diaphragms, but perfectly unbreakable, as the sapphire and mica plate are protected by a steel bar, somewhat similar to the needle holder on a sound box, but instead of this, NEOPHONE users may employ, if they wish, any phonograph diaphragm they may possess. The tone is considered by experts to be more natural and less unpleasant than when a needle is persistently scratching over a rough composition. This is undoubtedly aided by my records, which again are unbreakable, and are composed of a special composition which has the smooth appearance and finish of white china".

"But do the records last?"

"Well, just handle this and see for yourself. Cannot you believe that the wear of the actual writing must be less than if a sharply-pointed steel needle was continually scratching particles away? Another advantage I claim is that my machines are constructed with all the latest improvements, and as they will retail at two guineas complete for the concert size machine, and the  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " discs at sixpence, and the  $10\frac{1}{2}$ " at one shilling, we beat all previous prices if quality is taken into account." "Yes, Doctor," said our representative, "but what about the poor dealer?" "Our enormous output will allow us to give the public the fullest advantage and our dealers will also have as large, if not larger,

The  
18 Carat  
Gold Plated

PETMECKY  
DE LUXE

per packet  
of 100.

MULTITONE

SELF SHARPENING

NEEDLE

Plays Ten Records  
Electric

THE Petmecky Needle was famous 20 years ago for its consistent quality. It has maintained its foremost position and is still to-day the most popular gramophone Needle. The new electrical recordings have revolutionised the methods of gramophone reproduction and the new Gold-plated Petmecky de Luxe Needle is designed for and is especially suited to the new process records.

To obtain the best results from all Records, use only the new Gold Plated Petmecky de Luxe Needle.

CAN BE OBTAINED FROM ALL RECOGNISED FACTORS.

# EDISON BELL ELECTRON GRAMOPHONES

Recent developments in the production of Gramophone Records by the electrical process have necessitated an entire change in the construction of Sound Box and Internal Horn, and after careful and exhaustive experiment, we have embodied in the ELECTRON GRAMOPHONE a scientific combination of internal horn, tone arm and sound box which will ensure a perfect reproduction of all electrically recorded music, whether vocal or instrumental.

The Electron Gramophone extends the range of musical notes, and the patent internal horn permits amplification of tone without distortion.

*The Art and Science of the Gramophone  
is summed up in the words*

MANUFACTURED BY

**EDISON BELL, LIMITED,**  
LONDON, S.E.15.

WEST END  
SHOWROOMS:  
169, REGENT STREET.  
W.1.



## GREAT PIANISTS OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY.

RHAPSODY RHA 6006. BY ROGER HEWLAND.  
PRESIDENT RECORDS LTD, LONDON.

An LP collection of Pianists of the Past can be boring. This record is not.

D'Albert is a bit of a thumper. He bangs away with both hands without being much interested in Chopin's music. The pitch is wrong I think this track was transferred at too low a speed.

Sauer takes the music rather slowly but he does Mendelssohn a service in making the music more interesting than you would think. The music gets lost at times but this is the most interesting interpretation of Wings of Song I know.

Nikisch plays Brahms well and has the amazing gift of making the piano sound orchestral. What power.

R. Strauss good pianist playing a dull piece of his own. I believe there are more interesting items than this available for LP transfer.

Grieg as fine a pianist as his reputation. Very subtle and 'modern'. He gets all there out of the music. Unlike many composers (including some on this disc) he makes the most of his own music.

Carreno was one of D'Albert's wives. She caught something of his thumping style. The dancers sound as if they are wearing clogs. Transferred at a slow speed.

Debussy was a fine pianist. He sounds powerful and sure of what he is doing - which matches his known character. This 'submerged cathedral' sounds a bit near the surface of the water though.

## Side 2

Busoni is superb. There is no other words. Superb. Listening to this you hardly miss the voices of the Rigoletto quartette and played at this measured pace the perfection of Verdi's vocal line becomes clear.

de Pachmann - what dexterity! This waltz only takes half a minute. The slight hesitations in the line are fascinating.

## UNCANNY FORESIGHT

Referring to books can be fun, especially when the book is by such an extraordinary man as Harry Gaydon. For many years he was considered as the leading authority on recording and allied subjects. Recently his book THE ART AND SCIENCE OF THE GRAMOPHONE has come to hand and it has been invaluable for its technical content. The most interesting comment that Mr Gaydon had to make was as follows:

"The author ventures to predict that present day records will not be the records of the future. Records photographed on picture films are fast becoming a practical proposition, and may be in time a narrow transparent ribbon of some cheap material, having a photographed record, but without pictures, will be perfected and used exclusively for the reproduction of sound, or some form of magnetic record on a steel wire or strip may prove to be the final solution."

Well Mr Gaydon you have a point, but do you think that the public will accept it?

---oo00oo---

## THE JOHN SNOW

The Society's meeting at the "John Snow" on Tuesday May 9th was a double barrelled evening. In the first part, Alan Tuthill, in a programme chiefly of operatic and music hall items, played some transfers from cylinders and 78's to L.P. Probably few present while listening to the Dan Leno excerpt, noticed the Drury Lane poster featuring Leno in pantomime hanging in the room.

In the second half, the lights were lowered while Frank Andrews gave his version of "Son et Lumiere", using slides of records labels to a taped commentary and extracts from those records he showed. As usual he delighted the eye with colourful labels, but baffled the mind by asking for further information then, which was not always available.

The "John Snow" looks as if it has become our regular home. For the summer we continue to meet there on the second Tuesday of each month, and another evening will have to be arranged if we are to meet there next winter. Members will be kept informed and there will be a Saturday meeting there on June 3rd from 5.30 onwards.

The "John Snow" is in Broadwick Street, London, W1., the nearest Underground station being Oxford Circus.

## THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, NO. I. BY PATRICK CAREY.

A series in which some of the items in THE TALKING MACHINE NEWS & CINEMATOGRAPH CHRONICLE of 65 years ago are examined. It is hoped that this and subsequent extracts will give members an identification service not readily available from other sources.

In January 1907 Edison Bell claimed to be "The Only Manufacturers of Talking Machines in the King's Dominions....Pathe 11" (28 cm.) discs cost 3s.....The Pathe Disc Sound Box cost 7s6d. and the Pathe Junior Disc Playing Machine in walnut case cost 45s., all from Pathe Freres, 14/18 Lamb's Conduit Street, London, WC.....Russell-Hunting Record Co., 81 City Road, London, EC introduced Sterling Records that were a half inch longer (now giving up to 5inches of playing surface).....while Sterling & Hunting Ltd., 14, Hamsell Street, London, EC distributed 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Odeon Records, double sided for 5s... Sterling & Hunting again offered 4s6d. off a 12s. Fonotipia double sided recorded on presentation of a coupon.....The HERO Gramophone cost £3.10s.0d. from Howell Bros., Clerkenwell.....The Murdoch concern at 91/3 Farringdon Road, EC offered a range of disc machines in the EMPIRE series. There were three EMPIRE horn machines with Tournaphone sound boxes and two cabinet models, each with space for a gross of records (full details of these machines at end of article)...."White" Cylinders were retailing at 1s, from the manufacturers General Phonograph Co Ltd., 26 Euston Buildings, London, NW.....Columbia "Lyric" Records were discontinued in March 1907 and they intended to devote their cylinder facilities to "Symphonie" & "Premier" records (perhaps the "Lyric" & "Symphonic" terminology is new to some of us)....The International "Favorite" Record Co of 45 City Road, London, EC, offered 10" double and single sided Favorite records and Royal Favorite on 12" single sided....The Seymour Reproducer, with carbon diaphragm could be obtained post free for 12s.6d. from the manufacturers, E.M. Russell & Co., 16 St. Helen's Place, London, EC, it cost 10s6d. and 12s.6d. extra for carrier arms for Edison machines.....Imperial Records, which appeared to be single sided were imported by Albert Kimpton & Co., Peninsular House, Monument Street, London, WC....The M.K.O. reproducer cost 7s.9d. post free from Harrington & Law, 93, Hope Street, Glasgow. The advantages of the M.K.O. are not described.... The MURDOCH EMPIRE MODELS (noted above) No.1. Case 14"x14"x7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Searchlight horn 22"x18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Colour dark or

cont/over.....

light green outside, interior red stripes. Tournaphone Sound box. ...£4.15s.0d.

No.2. Case 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ "x15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " Chippendale ormolu fittings, corner pillars Searchlight horn 22"x18 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", gilt, rich crimson Turntable 10" crimson velvet, Tournaphone Sound box..£9.10s.0d.

No.3. Case 19"x19"x8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", Chippendale ormolu fittings Searchlight horn 29"x22" gilt and crimson .....15 guineas.

Cabinet Model No.1. Plain solid dull polished oak, holds 144 records £4.10s.0d.

Cabinet Model No.2. Solid polished mahogany with inlay holds 144 records £4.10s.0d.

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## EDISON RECORDS

There seem to be four main types of Standard Edison Disc labels 1913/29

1. The so-called etched label, the trade mark and title being pressed into the surface.
2. The black and white "Edison Record" label.
3. The black and white "Edison Recreation" label.
4. The black and white "Edison Re-creation" type without serifs.

Can someone inform me of the exact date these main types came into use?

G. Frow, [REDACTED] Sevenoaks, Kent.

---oo00oo---

Melvin Harris was heard on BBC Radio 3 on Saturday May 13th in a 45 minute programme, when he played and talked about his early recordings of oboe players. He included 2 minute Edison & Edison Bell cylinders, and veteran Zonophone, Pathe and Odeon discs. It is likely that he will be presenting further programmes on wind music, and asks members to let him know [REDACTED] if they come across any collections of early solo and duet wind instrument recordings.

---oo00oo---

## RECORDING TECHNIQUES

BY ALAN TUTHILL

From time to time one tends to wander back to the recording studios where the great master of the age both developed and recorded the cylinders and records that we now treasure as our own. It occurred to me recently that we do not know enough about the way in which the engineers of the time actually recorded. Quite a substantial amount

is known about the way in which discs were manufactured but it appears that not so much is known about the techniques that were used by the cylinder record companies. At first all cylinders were recorded individually so if a singer was to make a thousand copies he had to work for a very long time, sometimes ten hours or longer per day and this resulted in the output of 'customised' records, the listener knew that the singer had only made the one copy that sounded like his for they were all different. The ten hour working day for the artist saw to that.

The industry them came to a point where it had to modernise its recording techniques so it arranged a series of horns in a half circle so as to get as many records at one time as were possible. This had its advantages but it did have a drawback, there is only one perfect position for a recording horn and subsequently only one in ten customers had a good recording, the rest seeming rather distant and muffled. This was not to last for long, for the engineers had already thought of a method for mass producing cylinders. There are many references to the various ways in which they set to their task but none are really very informative. They discuss gold moulding which was in any case supposed to be an illusory name for powdered carbon they were tight lipped about the moulding process.

In later years with the advent of the 'Blue' the process can be accounted for; the matrix was steam heated and the expansion of the celluloid as it melted, moulded it to the matrix. The subsequent rapid cooling shrank the cylinder and it is purported to have dropped out of the moulds easily. Could this have been the case with the wax two minute cylinders? I don't think so for the grooves are so deep that any metal used in the process would have to have an enormous expansion in relation to its size, otherwise the cylinder would not come out of the mould. Any assistance that members could throw on this matter would be welcomed, perhaps we might even have a member with a mould somewhere.....If anyone has any suggestions on this subject we will publish them in the next issue.

--0000oo--

#### CORRECTION LAST ISSUE

"Winter Thoughts" was kindly sent in by Worthing member Sydney Carter. We apologise for not mentioning this in the issue.

discount than they obtain for other goods."

"What kind of talent is being used for so cheap a record?"

Dr. Michaelis at once took from his desk a list of five hundred selections by leading artistes and bands.

"Yes," said our representative, "but do you intend to enlarge your repertoire from time to time?" "We have not lost a moment," said the doctor, "in arranging each month to issue a supplementary list, and rest assured that whatever we think the market needs, we shall endeavour to supply."

An assistant then played a selection of our own choice in both sizes. We were particularly struck with the band selections, the individual instruments standing out in natural tones where solos were performed, the accompaniment being properly subdued. An examination of the instrument showed that due attention is not only given to the outer appearance, but that the movement is made to last, and altogether it strikes one as marvellous how such a machine can be retailed at such a price. All arrangements have been made, we are told, to meet the demand which no doubt will be made upon the manufacturers of the NEOPHONE during the season just commencing.

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This account of the Neophone Company and Dr. Michaelis differs in detail to that in the THE FABULOUS PHONOGRAPH p.126 (British Edition), although the offices were in Maiden Lane (as were those of the Gramophone & Typewriter Company), contemporary advertisements gave it also at Rosebery Avenue, and Gellatt in Finsbury Square. The record sizes were continental too; these were white laminated discs to start with, with Wedgewood type labels, but when found the layers seem to have come apart through damp or sunlight. The later records were black with blue or red Wedgewood type labels, and those heard seem very forward in volume. Has any member ever seen or found a Neophone 20" "L.P." record of 1906? The Company ceased trading in 1908. ED.

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#### NEW MEMBER WRITES IN.

Dear Sirs,

Although I have been in the record industry, and have had a collection of 78s for some years now, I did not realise that your society existed, that was, until a member of your committee came into my shop and told me. I must congratulate you on the spirit that you all must have and also thank you for the interesting shows that you have arranged. R.E. Bennett, London.

## MADAME STILES-ALLEN AT THE R.V.A.S.

by our London Correspondent

On May 24th, at the invitation of an old friend and past Treasurer of this society, Gordon Bromly, your correspondent was privileged to enjoy a delightful evening of reminiscences, records and renderings by Madame Lilian Stiles-Allen at the monthly meeting of the Recorded Vocal Arts Society.

With the title "Singing versus Speech", Madame Stiles-Allen left all present in no doubt of the efficacy of her methods and theories based on a full lifetime of singing and teaching. Singing, she assured us, was speech, and should start with basic vowel and consonant sounds, trilling and constant practice of tongue-twisters such as 'Peter Piper', and others. Clarity of diction was an absolute essential of Madame's singing training. It was her view that grand opera too easily bred indistinction, while Gilbert and Sullivan just had to be heard or lost it's point; she had never been a grand opera artiste, but had sown and reaped in the broad fields of oratorio, choral works, and recitals. During her talk, Madame Stiles-Allen played many of both her recordings and those of fellow artistes and pupils; the diction of Fischer-Dieskau, for instance, was particularly good and the personification of all her principles. Björling too had a beautiful voice, beautiful diction, as had Flagstad and Gerard Souzay. In the realms of film musicals she had trained Julie Andrews from a young girl, and regarded her as a paragon of clarity and diction. English is as good a language to sing in as any, and the niceties of accentuation at times offered a superable challenge to any trained singer.

Madame Stiles-Allen went on to describe her earlier singing career; a Londoner, she trained at the Guildhall School of Music and achieved high honours, and went on to describe her first concert. The School principal, Sir Landon Ronald, had arranged for her first recital before the public to be at the Albert Hall during a Kreisler appearance there and she recalled with feeling her absolute terror when the night arrived and what encouragement Kreisler gave her, how he talked to her to calm her nerves, and when eventually she walked out in front of the thousands of faces, she had complete composure.

The voice changes with age, and nearly all singers have a vocal crisis at sometime in their careers. Madame Stiles-Allen

found out that hers came just before and during the early part of the last war when concerts came to a finish. Eventually she had a contract to sing with Beecham but found her vocal powers at their lowest ebb. Her old teacher had died, and not being able to sing above B flat, she felt impelled to work on her voice herself. Her words had gone in her fondness for using her voice, and by restraining her voice by unorthodox methods, despite her husband's doubts, she eventually regained it and now teaches this method. Madame Stiles-Allen delighted her audience by singing "Angels Ever Bright and Fair" ("Theodore-Handel"), while remaining seated. Madame assured her audience that singing should be just as easy sitting down as standing up by her teaching precepts, even when one reaches the age of eighty two.

She recalled her recording career principally with the Edison Bell Company, and played a selection of her recordings. This company had also made records for Woolworths, and her recordings for the store were made under the name of Linda Hynd. A visit to Peckham for recordings started early after breakfast, and occupied all the day, the final takes being usually at about six o'clock in the evening. One generally took one's accompanist, or if an orchestra was used, this was normally directed by Joe Patten or John Barbirolli. Her soprano voice was large and tended to be difficult to record on the contemporary electrical equipment; while training as a child, she was told that hers was the choice between becoming a soprano or a contralto, but was advised that opportunities for the former were better.

Madame Stiles-Allen included many anecdotes of her career, of singing oratorio and concerts abroad and at home, of "Elijah" and "Hiawatha" at the Albert Hall between the wars, Sir Henry Wood Promenade Promenade Concerts, the Queens Hall. Here was someone who had done all these things and more at a time that seems so long ago now, but was today still working to train young singers and inspire them with an ability to "live on the interest of their voices", as she had done "not the capital". Although a Londoner, much of Madame's work had taken her among the choirs and societies of the north; the Yorkshire College of Music and Drama, near Leeds, had been her foundation.

The R.V.A.S. is a body of members immersed in the interest of fine singing, and from their enthusiasm and warm applause it was evident that they recognised one who was an absolute mistress of her profession.

Records played during the evening were:

|                                    |  |             |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------|
| Flagstad                           | The Swan (Grieg)   | HMV DA 1879 |
| Flagstad                           | Eros (Grieg)   | HMV DA 1879 |
| Björling                           | Requiem (Verdi) Ingemisco  | HMV DB 3665 |
| Björling                           | Stabat Mater (Rossini) Cujus Animam  | HMV DB 3665 |
| Fischer-Dieskau                    | 3 Mahler Songs   | HMV         |
| Julie Andrews                      | It's A Lazy Afternoon  | Decca       |
| Stiles-Allen                       | "Cavalleria Rusticana" No No   |             |
|                                    | Turiddu  | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen and Dan Jones (tenor) |  |             |
|                                    | Love Duet.. Madame Butterfly   | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Tosca Vissi d'arte   | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Boheme Mi Chiamono Mimi  | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Arise O Sun (Day)  | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Can Ye Sew Cushions?   | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Whenever A Snowflake Leaves the Sky  | Edison Bell |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Frederica Love Will Kiss And Ride Away   | Edison Bell |
|                                    | (Edison Bell records piano accompanied or orchestra<br>conducted by Joe Batten or John Barbirolli) |             |
| Gerard Souzay                      | Two French Songs   | Decca       |
| Stiles-Allen                       | Nearer My God to Thee  | Private     |
|                                    | (This was recorded in the Crystal Palace main transept<br>at the last Handel Festival).            |             |

\* \* \* \* \*

### REPRINTED LABELS

We are enclosing some of our reprinted labels in this issue and would first of all like to thank all the members who have sent in parts of their collections so that we may all enjoy them. Our reprinting is not confined to Edison, though there are more of his about. If you have any made by the Columbia Co. or the Pathe Co. we would like to reprint them as well. Due to the technique we use it is not possible to reproduce the photographic labels on glossy paper, that the Edison Co used, at least for the present. So if you have any labels do send them, we will try to reproduct as many as we can.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ARCHIVES FOR THE SOCIETY

An archive for the use of society members is well on the way, following requests for recordings we have received a number which are being stored at the editorial office for the time

being. Due to the fact that the list would be very small we are not as yet offering the copies of the master tapes to be taken out on loan, but as soon as we get enough to make a fair sized list we will offer them. If your collection is harbouring any two minute waxes and you feel that they should be recorded, please send a card marked ACHIVES to the editorial office.

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## ANOTHER VOICE FROM THE PAST

by DAVID WILLIAMS

### JOHN McCORMACK

John McCormack, tenor, was born at Athlone, Westmeath, on the 14th June, 1884. While still a youngster he entered as a competitor in the National Irish Festival, and (to his own immense surprise, it was said) won the Denza Gold Medal for tenor singing. This was in 1903, and it naturally helped him to decide to take up singing seriously. He made his concert debut in Dublin during the same year, joined the Catholic Cathedral choir, and later went to Milan, where he studied with Sebastian to such excellent purpose that in 1905 he made his first operatic appearance before the always critical Italian audience singing in "L'Amico Fritz" at Savona. In 1907 he made a highly successful first appearance at Covent Garden during the Autumn season in "Cavalleria Rusticana".

Mr. McCormack's voice was said by a well known critical writer to resemble that of Sims Reeves in quality, a likeness which became even more apparent as the years passed by.

Britain, and more particularly Ireland, had every reason to feel proud of the young tenor, who began his stage career in the year 1905 and who, at the age of twenty seven years, had completed his fourth season at the Covent Garden Opera House. He added to his laurels in 1910, by securing an engagement in Italy in the September of that year, singing together with Mme Tetrazzini and Sig Marcoux, at the Opera House in Parma, under the baton of his friend Signor Campanini and was met with warm recognition for his evident ability.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

BY LEN WATTS

It is such a long time since a Chairman's chat has appeared in this magazine that readers must begin to wonder if we have a Chairman. I can assure them that we have, and I hope that this chat will prove interesting enough to make amends. I find life

so full that if I could stay awake, I could fill all the day by doing something.

Moving house is always a big upheaval, and we have had to do just that earlier this year. It was unfortunate that we were given such short notice to quit the White Swan, I think it must have been a 'snap' decision on the part of the owners, because on the day that I went to collect our equipment, the Licensee was in a great hurry to pack all of his belongings, and he remarked that it was a good job it had happened at Easter weekend as it had given him more time.

Fortunately our Vice Chairman knew of another meeting place which might suit us, so I duly contacted the Licensee and found that he was willing to let us have the room. Whilst it is not in the City of London, as our last place was, it is not far outside, and the room is pleasant enough. Added to this is the fact that the Licensee, Mr. Ron McGrindle is himself a phonograph enthusiast, and both the bar downstairs and our meeting room are liberally decorated with model ships, railway engines and pictures. Just for the record, and in case any reader does not yet know our new venue it is at: The John Snow, Broadwick Street, London, W1., approximately mid-way between Oxford Circus & Piccadilly Circus Underground stations. Street car parking is permitted - if you can find a gap - and there is an underground car park nearby.

Turning to our hobby, and the reason for having the Society, for a few moments, we have had several excellent programmes since the last A.G.M. but most have been of discs, including some LP's. It would be nice if we could have more cylinder programmes. Of course our President always obliges us in this way, but if my memory serves me correctly, I think his has been the only cylinder recital this year.

Your Chairman himself must admit to playing tape at one meeting but at least it was of two minute wax cylinders. My chief interest is, as most of you know, centre start Pathe discs.

This brings me to another point, research into old record companies. Sydney Carter's and Major Annand's research and publications in the cylinder field are now well known and other members are researching other types of record. My own listing of Pathe discs, both centre and edge start, for the English market is now virtually complete. Thanks to two catalogues of

FROM P155.

Granados plays his Spanish music with fine rhythm in national style. Transferred a bit slow I would think.

Leschetizky must have been quite old when he played this. A piano-roll? He retired in 1886. His age merely can be guessed at by the perfect technique and perfect pace. His playing is subtle, finely graded and some of the very greatest I have ever heard.

When I read on the sleeve note that Schnabel and Paderewski were among his pupils I am not surprised. I would say that neither of them (great pianists though they both were) were any greater than their master. If you are at all interested in historic piano records (or just piano playing of any kind) you should listen to this track and consider, what you have listened to.

Dohnanyi interesting but, I would think, rather young.

Saint-Saens. Such light music played lightly with faultless technique. A bit dull though I thought.

Paderewski in this selection is a bit of a 'thumper'. This type of playing has never been uncommon and is still with us on LP and in the concert halls of today. Transferred a bit slow.

Rachmaninov plays the Prelude he came to dislike. The recording is thin and has much too much reverberation. His later recording of this is very good. Fine playing.

An interesting record, well chosen. I am not too happy about the speeds used and have noted tracks that sound obviously wrong. For the sake of Leschetizky, Busoni, Grieg and Nikisch, it is a fine bargain record for 90p. that, if the piano interests you, is worth having in your collection.

--oo0oo--

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ARTICLE LAST ISSUE.

## GRAMOPHONES IN MINIATURE

BY GEORGE FROW

The gathering together of gramophone miniatures can be an interesting sideline to the more serious business of searching for their proto-types, and they make an interesting adjunct to every collection.

It must be emphasized however, that these decorative little miniatures are not in any way working models, they are not Lilliputian gramophones in the same category as the Cameraphone and the Peter Pan, but being made of china, brass, copper, plastic and wood, some have a practical use as ashtrays, matchboxes, lighters and so forth.

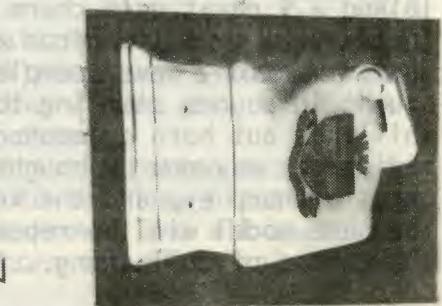
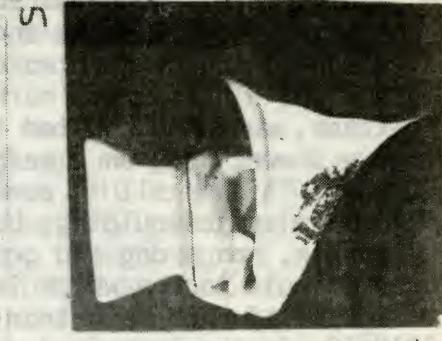
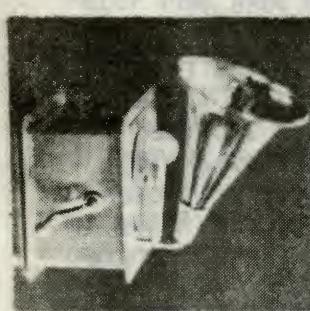
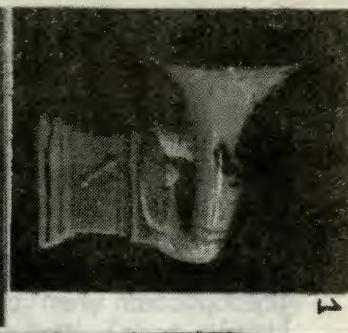
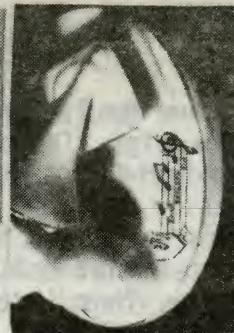
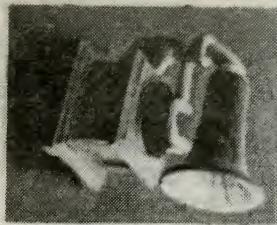
One cannot attempt any history of the earliest of these, but Goss and crest china collectors would have knowledge of the correct period of introduction; an approximate guess is from 1910 to 1925. The little china machines were made in a horn or hornless style and appropriately marked with the crest and name of seaside or inland resorts or tourist centres; they were sold in souvenir shops alongside the pink sticks of peppermint rock, 'lettered right through', and which survive today. The china gramophones have long since become curios.

A selection of photographs is shown as follows (see page 170).

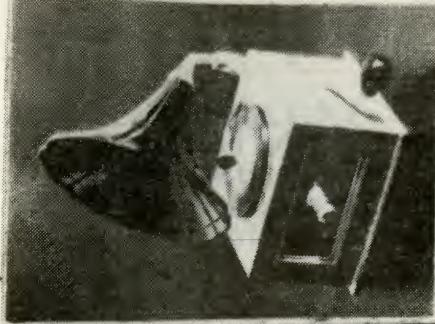
- 1) Brighton (a South Coast seaside town)
- 2) Upper Norwood (until 1956 the Crystal Palace stood here)
- 3) Broadstairs (a Kent seaside town)
- 4) Rochester (a minor tourist town with Dickens connections)  
Crest china figures are sometimes referred to by the general name of Goss china, but are in fact made by a number of pottery manufacturers, Podmore, Griffin, Shelley, Carlton, Arcadian are examples, and of course foreign. The functional parts of the full sized machines are often crudely depicted in the miniature; obviously the designer and mould maker had their headaches over the shape and delicate outline of the tone arm and horn bracket; the writer recalls having two beautifully balanced examples many years ago, but these were smashed by an unruly visiting child and it has not been possible to find comparable examples.
- 5) The H.M.V. trade mark creeps into several china pieces and No. 5, marked Dymchurch (a small resort in Kent) has even a piece of music and "His Masters Voice" to ensure that the viewer gets the point of the gramophone and the saucy looking pup.
- 6) No. 6, is an extension of this theme, but substituting two pigs for the dog, and is the first example shown to have any practical use, being an ash tray. Several of these are known, and all seem to be similar, green with gilt inside the horn and flesh coloured pigs.

- 7) Almost certainly from the same maker came No.7, with a gilded Dachshund (?) being substituted for the pigs. The body of the ashtray is white, crested with Southend-on-Sea (an Essex Seaside town).
- 8) Since the earliest doll's houses, there must have been makers of dolls' furniture and it would be expected that dolls would enjoy gramophones when they became fashionable. Thus in the 1920's the little model (No8) was sold, this particular model was reconstructed from the horn and case only, and to give an idea of proportion, the turntable is a sixpenny piece.
- 9) Various H.M.V. trade mark miniatures were supplied to the record trade, suitably mounted for useful functions, and two of these are shown, No9, on a weighted base slotted to receive a price
- 10) card. This is all in common plaster, but the HMV ashtray (No10)
- 11) is a plastic moulding; both date from the 1930's. No11. of Victor origin, has a dog and gramophone pepper and salt set, but it is difficult to see which is intended for which model. These too are in plastic and date from the 1950's.
- 12) No12. is the brass and copper gramophone offered by the Society.
- 13) No13. is a brass gramophone incorporating a musical box in the base. This one plays the theme from 'Limelight'.
- 14) The most realistic of these miniatures is undoubtedly the Spanish reproduction (No14) which has a match tray for its entrails, a little out-of-date perhaps functionally, but it has a handsome polished wooden case, a black plastic horn, and a record bearing an H.M.V. green label. Metal parts are in gilt.
- 15) Another example found in Spain is the wooden-box gramophone (No15) with minuscule padlock and key. As a gramophone model it has little to commend it, and this weakness is particularly noticeable in another Spanish miniature, this time large enough to act as a
- 16) butter dish to a half-pound slab (No16).
- 17) Having reached the giant of the miniatures, a quick glance in the other direction shows these two babies, a key-ring gramophone (No17).
- 18) And a 9 carat gold charm bracelet (No18).

These are a selection from a collection, but like the full-sized machine collection, never complete. The earlier china specimens are bought in pounds sterling today where they used to be priced in shillings but horn gramophones being now considered trendy the latter miniatures may now be bought from tourist novelty shops; the tourist needs a sharp eye and the knowledge that if he finds one, it is likely the same model will be repeated in subsequent shops, but that's one of the chores of collecting...too much instead of two little. The



14



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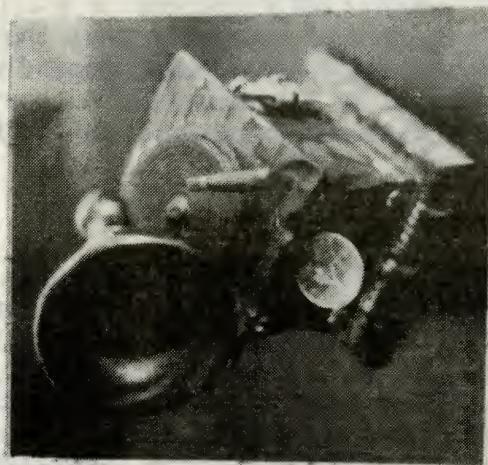
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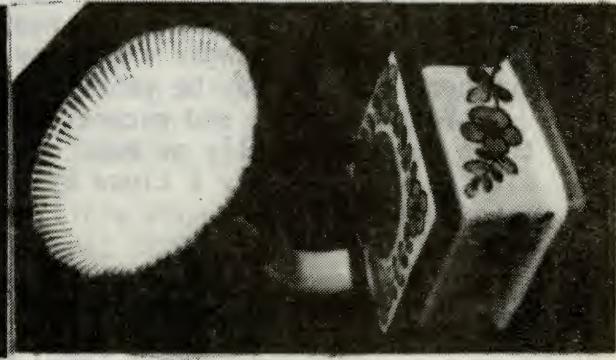
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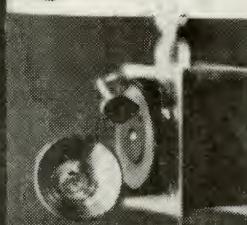
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17



18



Contd. from p.169.

pleasant part of course is that the interest in the hobby can be continued while on holiday, depending to some extent if one is accompanied by the Household Authority, but do assure her that these miniatures complement any Talking Machine collection.

\* \* \* \* \*

Contd. from p. 165.

the mid twenties recently loaned by a non-member, quite a number of gaps in the edge start paper label series have now been filled. The only serious gaps I have are in the 8½" centre start series. If any reader has access to makers catalogues I907-8-9-I0-II, giving details of these little discs I would be extremely grateful for any information.

Veteran singer George Baker still keeps in touch with the Society. He made his first records for Pathe in 1903 and has visited two of our meetings. I had a letter from him recently thanking me for a book that I had sent him, and saying that he had heard that Tom Kinniburgh had returned to this country. Here we have another singer who recorded in the early days and it is our hope that we may be able to get in touch with him.

Both machines and records are becoming harder to acquire these days especially as most of the old time junk shops have disappeared, but may I close by wishing you all successful and happy hunting.

Len Watts, Chairman.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SOME OF THE CYLINDER RECORDS AVAILABLE IN GT. BRITAIN IN 1907 compiled by Frank Andrews.

|   |           |  |
|---|-----------|--|
| COLUMBIA SYMPHONIC                                    | @ 1/-     | Columbia Phonograph Co, London   |
| COLUMBIA PREMIER 6" LONG                              | @ 2/-     | " " " "  |
| COLUMBIA PREMIER CLASSICS                             | @ 3/-     | " " " "  |
| CLARION   | @ 9d      | Premier Manufacturing Co. London   |
| Edison Gold Moulded                                   | @ 1/6     | National Phonograph Co.  |
| " " " later   | 1/-       | 25, Clerkenwell Road, London   |
| EDISON BELL GOLD MOULDED                              | 1/-       | Edison Bell Consolidated   |
| " " " later   | 9d        | 39, Charing Cross Rd., London  |
| LINGUAPHONE(LANGUAGE COURSE)<br>(mnfted. by Sterling) |           | International Linguaphone Co.  |
| PATHE CYLINDERS                                       | @ 3gns.81 | City Road London   |
|   |           | Apparently no new recordings. Old stock was<br>selling at reduced prices, through dealers. |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| RUSSELL INDESTRUCTIBLE    | @ 1/- F.M. RUSSELL & Co. London   |
| STERLING                  | @ 1/- RUSSELL HUNTING RECORD Co. London   |
| Tredagh Records           | @ 1/- A.J. Scott, Limerick, Ireland   |
| (Accordion by A.J. Scott) |   |
| WHITE                     | @ 1/- GENERAL PHONOGRAPH CO. Euston Rd.<br>London (later at Rose Place,<br>London). |

\* \* \* \* \*

NOTES: Premier Manufacturing Co. (original offices were at Wilson Square, London) were registered on 3rd July with a capital of £10,000 in £1 shares. They moved to 81 City Road, London, which were the recently vacated premises of the Russell Hunting Record Co. Ltd. Cylinder records that were no longer mentioned in 1907, and are therefore presumed to have demised were: Columbia XP, Columbia Lyric, Imperial Record (Camden Town), International Indestructible, Lambert Unbreakable Solid Gold Moulded, London Popular, Nicole Gold Moulded, Champion, all Pathe types, Rex, Gold Star.

It was reported in Jan. 1907 that the 'Imperial Phono Exchange' of Camden Town, Makers of the IMPERIAL cylinder record, had been convicted of illegal duplicating of records.

The Russell Hunting Record Co. and Sterling & Hunting Ltd. moved to 13/15/17, City Road, during the year, from which premises were sold Odeon and Fonotipia disc records and Sterling and Linguaphone cylinder records.

It was announced that 'The Indestructible Phonograph Record Co' were to issue their first catalogue in August 1907. Disc or Cylinder?

The White Record 12" D/S was a Phono-cut disc.

British Phonograph Industries Ltd. went bankrupt in August 1907. They were the last manufacturers of 'ELECTRIC' cylinder records. I have not seen any advertised since 1905, however.

COLUMBIA CYLINDER RECORDINGS of General Booth sold at the special price of 1/6.

from Frank Andrews

\* \* \* \* \*

### STROBING AT HIGH SPEEDS.

Just sometimes we have a space to fill in the last pages. This article might help those who want stroboscopes made to exact specifications at high speeds, it might baffle but it is useful.

The electricity supply in England is supplied at 50 cycles a second, that means that the supply is momentarily switched off

100 times every second, a comforting thought to those of us prone to electrical shocks. If you count the black lines on a stroboscope you will find that 78 RPM strobos have 77 lines. The formula is as follows: DIVIDE REQUIRED REV'S X 60 to find the revs per (1.3) second; and MULTIPLY BY FIGURE TO REACH 100 (77)

thus you will find that you have made 77 the answer and must divide your circle with 77 lines. This is the way in which your strobe is made. Have you spotted the fact that  $77 \times 1.3 = 100.1$ ? Because that means that ALL stroboscopes must be marginally inaccurate, in these days of socalled accuracy with stroboscopic readings quoted in decimal points, one wonders if the people concerned have taken into account the small difference.

The Americans however have a greater burden to bear, because using this time honoured system but substituting 120 for the 100 because the supply there is at 60 cycles per second, the reading should be 92.3 lines, an impossibility (an American strobe has 92 lines).

To make a stroboscope for 120 revs (an easy one) divide by 60 (2) multiply by a figure to make 100 (50) so 50 lines would give a completely accurate reading @ 120 revs. at 50 cycles.

Making the stroboscope is not too difficult providing that you have not forgotten the Pythagoras principle, as I have (its circumference equals 3.1 times the radius, I think). Firstly draw out as large as possible a circle. Multiply the radius measurement by the Pythagorus Theorum and then divide the answer by the number of lines that you require. The answer will give the distance between the lines at the extremity of the circle. A pair of dividers 'walked' round the outer rim will give the points from which the lines should be drawn. Make sure that the lines are of equal width. You can now cut the stroboscope down to a size that is easily handled.

Alan Tuthill

\* \* \* \*

As stated in the Editorial, the Editorial Office has moved to Reading, Berkshire. The address is as follows:

10 SOUTH STREET, CAVERSHAM, READING, BERKS, ENGLAND.  
All subscriptions should be sent to the Treasurer of the Society whose address is:

A.D.Besford, [REDACTED], Norfolk, England.



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